

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-06 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 /040 W

-----281954Z 033426 /63 R

P 281734Z APR 77

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6918

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 3205

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AORG, WHO

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH MAHLER

REF: STATE 087364, GENEVA 2769

SUMMARY: DURING LUNCH WITH CHARGE, WHO DIRECTOR GENERAL MAHLER PRESENTED HIS OVERVIEW OF THE DIRECTION HE FELT WHO SHOULD MOVE IN THE COMING YEARS AND OF THE CHALLENGE THIS PRESENTED THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. IF ANYTHING, HOWEVER, THIS OVERVIEW CONFIRMED THE CONCERNS THAT GENEVA HAS ALREADY EXPRESSED WITH RESPECT TO THE DANGER THAT, IF NOT GUARDED AGAINST, WHO COULD EVOLVE INTO MORE OF AN INSTRUMENT OF TAXATION THAN A GLOBAL COORDINATOR OF HEALTH PROGRAMS. MISSION USED OCCASION TO EXPLAIN OUR POSITION ON THE WHO BUDGET AND OUR CONCEPT OF A "PAUSE FOR CONSOLIDATION." END SUMMARY.

1. DURING AN EXTENDED LUNCHEON LAST WEEK WITH CHARGE, WHO DIRECTOR GENERAL MAHLER SPOKE EXPANSIVELY OF WHO'S ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND OF THE ORGANIZATION'S FUTURE. ADVERTING TO THE ILO CONCEPT OF BASIC HUMAN NEEDS (BROUGHT TOGETHER IN THE DOCUMENTATION FOR THE ILO WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE LAST YEAR), MAHLER SAID THAT WORLD HEALTH PROBLEMS COULD ONLY BE MEANINGFULLY TACKLED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF AN OVERALL APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF DEVELOPMENT. PICKING UP ON  
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FIGURES FROM THE TINBERGEN REPORT, HE SAID THAT THE RESOURCE TRANSFER REQUIRED TO GENERATE THE THIRD WORLD GROWTH NECESSARY TO PROVIDE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS WAS "ONLY" IN THE ORDER OF DOLS 15 BILLION ANNUALLY. OF THIS TOTAL, HE ESTIMATED THAT PORTION NEEDED TO ORGANIZE AN ADEQUATE HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEM ON A WORLD-WIDE BASIS WOULD BE ROUGHLY 5 OR 6 PERCENT -- ABOUT DOLS 800 MILLION. HE

CHARACTERIZED THIS SUM AS "NOTHING." THIS OBSERVATION WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTING IN THE LIGHT OF AN EARLIER REFERENCE THAT MAHLER MADE ABOUT HIS OWN BACKGROUND. HE CAME, HE SAID, FROM AN ARISTOCRATIC BUT POOR BACKGROUND WHICH DISDAINED CONCERN FOR MONEY.

2. MAHLER CLEARLY VIEWS THE WHO AS BEING AT A TURNING POINT. AS AUTHOR OF THE NEW WHO "POLICY AND STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION," (EB DOCUMENT 59/6 ANNEX 1, WHICH SOMEWHAT IMPLICITLY WILL BE UP FOR APPROVAL IN THE UPCOMING ASSEMBLY) MAHLER HAS A CONSIDERABLE PERSONAL STAKE IN THE NEW DIRECTION THAT WHO WILL TAKE. MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT CONFORMS TO HIS OWN DEEPLY FELT SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY. HE IS PARTICULARLY ENCOURAGED BY WHAT HE PERCEIVES TO BE A MORE FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE IN WASHINGTON WITH RESPECT TO THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT. IN HIS ENTHUSIASM, HE SAID "THERE WAS NOTHING THAT COULD NOT NOW BE DONE IF WE WOULD JUST DARE."

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ACTION IO-13

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6919

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 3205

3. TAKING MAHLER UP ON THE THRUST OF HIS PRESENTATION, CHARGE SAID THAT MAHLER WAS CORRECT IN SENSING THAT THERE WAS A NEW SET OF ATTITUDES IN WASHINGTON WITH RESPECT TO THE QUESTION OF DEVELOPMENT. MOREOVER, THERE WAS GREAT SUPPORT FOR WHO AND DEEP ADMIRATION FOR MAHLER PERSONALLY. CHARGE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WAS GROWING CONCERN IN THE UNITED STATES OVER THE GROWTH OF BUDGETS IN UN ORGANIZATIONS AND REVIEWED SOME OF THE MAIN POINTS OF THE RIBICOFF REPORT IN THE LIGHT OF THIS CONCERN. WHO FELL WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF THIS INTEREST. THE UNITED STATES PROPOSAL AT THE MARCH GENEVA GROUP MEETING OF A "PAUSE FOR CONSOLIDATION," HE SAID, WAS OUR EFFORT TO BE RESPONSIVE

TO THIS CONCERN AND REFLECTED OUR WISH TO VOUCHSAFE OUR SUPPORT OVER THE LONG RUN FOR ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS WHO. IF WE THEREFORE TAKE A HARD LOOK AT THE WHO BUDGET AND AT ITS PROGRAM CONTENT DURING THE UPCOMING ASSEMBLY, THIS WILL REFLECT A HEALTHY AND CONSTRUCTIVE INTEREST.

4. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF OUR LUNCHEON WITH MAHLER AND SOME OF HIS TOP-RANKING COLLEAGUES WAS TO PREPARE THEM FOR WHAT WE ANTICIPATE WILL BE A TOUGH LOOK AT WHO'S BUDGET AND PROGRAMS AS IMPLIED BY OUR STANCE DURING THE MARCH MEETING OF THE GENEVA GROUP AND AS INSTRUCTED IN STATE 087364. AS IT TURNED OUT -- INDEED, AS WE HAD SUSPECTED -- MAHLER HAD ALREADY HEARD OF OUR GENEVA CONFIDENTIAL

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GROUP PRESENTATION. THE MEETING WAS ESPECIALLY USEFUL, THEREFORE, IN PUTTING OUR POSITION INTO PERSPECTIVE AND CASTING IT IN A POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE LIGHT.

5. IN FACT, HOWEVER, MAHLER'S PRESENTATION DID NOTHING TO ASSUAGE OUR CONCERNS, EXPRESSED IN GENEVA'S 2769, WITH RESPECT TO THE LONG TERM DIRECTION OF WHO. MAHLER IS DOING HIS BEST TO MAKE WHO EFFECTIVE AND TO CUT OUT FAT. INDEED, IN THE MISSION'S VIEW WHO IS CERTAINLY ONE OF THE BETTER RUN OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES IN GENEVA. NEVERTHELESS, MAHLER IS THINKING BIT. HIS SIGHTS ARE HIGH. HE SPOKE ELOQUENTLY AND WITH CONVICTION WHEN HE SAID HE COULD TRANSFORM HEALTH CONDITIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IF HE WERE GIVEN A FREE HAND AND DOLS 800 MILLION A YEAR. HOWEVER, GIVEN EXISTING REALITIES IN THE LIGHT OF WHO'S PRECEDENTIAL DECISION TO SPEND AT LEAST 60 PERCENT OF ITS ASSESSED BUDGET ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION BY 1980 -- AND ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF LDC PRESSURE TO TAP THE REGULAR BUDGETS OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THEREBY INCREASE THE TRANSFER OF RESOURCES -- WE THINK ATTENTION SHOULD BE FOCUSED ON THE LONGER-TERM POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF WHO'S REORIENTATION WHICH THE MISSION RAISED IN GENEVA 2769. IN OUR VIEW, THE ISSUE WITH WHICH WE SHOULD BE SEIZED IS HOW THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS CAN MAKE SURE THAT WHO DOES NOT EVOLVE INTO MORE OF A TAXING AUTHORITY THAN A GLOBAL COORDINATOR OF HEALTH PROGRAMS.SORENSEN

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